

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A beverage base comprising less than 0.05% ethanol and a fermented coffee component comprising coffee aroma, which fermented coffee component, has a modulated coffee aroma with fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma, the coffee aroma also having a ratio of 2- and 3-methylbutanol over 2- and 3-methylbutanal of greater than 1, and a ratio of thioacetates over thiols of greater than 0.5.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A-The beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the coffee component is selected from the group consisting of coffee extract, coffee aroma, and coffee extract from which a portion of coffee aroma has been removed.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A-The beverage base according to claim 2, wherein the coffee aroma is a distillate of coffee aroma compounds from a coffee component selected from the group consisting of coffee grounds and coffee extracts.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A-The beverage base according to claim 1, which comprises at least 0.2 % coffee solids by weight of the beverage base.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A-The beverage base according to claim 1, which comprises between 0.01% and 2% coffee aroma by weight of coffee solids in the beverage base.

Claim 6 (canceled):

Claim 7 (currently amended): A-The beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the beverage base does not have higher amounts of acetic acid resulting from fermentation than was present in the coffee component prior to fermentation.

Claim 8 (currently amended): ~~A-The~~ beverage base according to claim 1, the beverage base comprising an artificial aroma component.

Claims 9-10 (canceled):

Claim 11 (currently amended): ~~A-The~~ beverage base according to claim 1 having foam properties sufficient to cause foam to be created on the upper surface of the beverage when prepared.

Claim 12 (currently amended): ~~A-The~~ beverage base according to claim 1, wherein the beverage base is a concentrate selected from the group consisting of a liquid beverage concentrate and a soluble beverage concentrate.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A ready-to-drink beverage comprising less than 0.05% ethanol and a fermented coffee component comprising coffee aroma, which fermented coffee component, has a modulated coffee aroma with fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma, the coffee aroma also having a ratio of 2- and 3-methylbutanol over 2- and 3-methylbutanal of greater than 1, and a ratio of thioacetates over thiols of greater than 0.5.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A process for providing a coffee beverage base comprising

providing a coffee component comprising coffee aroma,
providing a micro-organism with an ability to ferment,
inoculating the coffee component with the micro-organism, and
subjecting the incubated coffee component to fermentation at a temperature below 22°C and without aeration to generate a fermented coffee component that has a fruity and/or floral note due the fermentation of the coffee aroma, while controlling the fermentation conditions to substantially prevent the generation of alcohol and provide a coffee beverage base having less than 0.05% ethanol.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A-The process according to claim 14, comprising supplementing the coffee component with a carbohydrate effective to enhance the fermentation process.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A-The process according to claim 14, wherein the fermentation temperature is between 5 and 22°C.

Claim 17 (currently amended): A-The process according to claim 14, wherein the time of the fermentation is from 4 to 8 hours.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A fermented coffee aroma having fruity and/or floral notes due to the fermentation of the coffee aroma, wherein the aroma having a ratio of 2-and 3-methylbutanol over 2-and 3-methylbutanal of greater than 1, and a ratio of thioacetates over thiols of greater than 0.5.

Claim 19 (canceled):

Claim 20 (previously presented): The process according to claim 14, wherein the fermentation temperature is between 8 to 22°C.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The process according to claim 14, wherein the time of the fermentation is from 4 to 6 hours.